



# City of Salinas

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR • 200 Lincoln Avenue • Salinas, California 93901 • (831) 758-7201 • Fax (831) 758-7368

March 18, 2003

Honorable Robert O'Farrell, Presiding Judge  
Superior Court of California, Monterey County  
240 Church Street  
Salinas, California 93901

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO CIVIL GRAND JURY:  
FLUORIDATION OF DRINKING WATER IN MONTEREY COUNTY

Dear Judge O'Farrell:

I would like to offer thanks, on behalf of the Salinas City Council and our residents, to the members of the 2002 Civil Grand Jury. The work of the 2002 Civil Grand Jury, similar to past civil grand juries will undoubtedly improve operating efficiencies and effectiveness of local government in Monterey County. I would like to also acknowledge that the quality of this year's final report is reflective of the exceptional job Court staff has done in support of the Civil Grand Jury's work.

The City of Salinas, as you are already aware, does not own - nor does it operate the two water systems providing service to our 150,000 residents. The City, in its effort to effectively respond to the findings and recommendation of the Civil Grand Jury regarding "Fluoridation of Drinking Water in Monterey County," consulted with the Monterey County Health Department on this issue. The Health Department is charged with providing technical, scientific, and medical oversight of public health programs relating to preservation and protection of the public health of Monterey County residents. The Health Department provided invaluable support in aiding the City in analyzing this issue based on accepted scientific research.

Attached for your review are the City's responses to the Civil Grand Jury's findings and recommendation. If you need further clarification on the City's response to this issue, please contact Wayne green of my office at 758-7141.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "D. Jyl Lutes", is written over a horizontal line.

D. JYL LUTES  
Mayor Pro Tem

Attachment

cc: Mayor and City Council

**City of Salinas Response**  
**Monterey County Civil Grand Jury**  
**2002 Final Report: Fluoridation of Drinking Water in Monterey County**

---

**FINDING 1:** Fluoridation of drinking water will provide a positive health benefit to the residents of the County with the greatest benefit accruing to the most disadvantaged citizens.

**RESPONSE:** The City agrees with Finding 1. The scientific evidence available, and the experience of the thousands of communities across the country that are provided optimally fluoridated water, supports the conclusion that fluoridation of local drinking water will provide positive health benefits to residents of Salinas, particularly those who lack routine access to preventive dental services.

**FINDING 2:** With the possible exception of smaller water systems, start-up and operations costs of drinking water fluoridation are more than offset by cost avoidance in the areas of dental and general health care.

**RESPONSE:** The City agrees with Finding 2. California taxpayers bear the financial burden of almost \$700 million a year in Denti-Cal costs. The annual cost to individuals, families and employers associated with the treatment of preventable dental disease, particularly caries, and dental insurance, exceed the costs of routine fluoridation of community drinking water. The estimated per person cost to fluoridate drinking water in Salinas ranges from \$2 - \$12 a year.

**FINDING 3:** There are a multitude of water providers and jurisdictions within the County, and there is no coordinated advocacy program joining political leadership and health professions to implement fluoridation of drinking water.

**RESPONSE:** The City agrees with Finding 3. There is currently no coordinated advocacy effort to implement fluoridation of drinking water.

**CIVIL GRAND JURY RECOMMENDATION**

The Civil grand Jury recommends that Salinas, which is served by private providers seek funding and express public support for implementation of water fluoridation by their water suppliers, and establish a schedule to accomplish these goals.

**CITY'S RESPONSE TO THE CIVIC GRAND JURY'S RECOMMENDATION**

The City, as the Civil Grand Jury is already aware, does not own, operate nor does it have the have the financial resources to undertake an initiative to fluoridate community water supplies. However, the City in a leadership position will work with the Monterey County Health Department, the Monterey County Fluoridation Taskforce and community based organizations that undertake the mission to educate the public about oral health issues. In addition, the City will support an initiative that has widespread support from our residents that seek federal or foundation founding for capital and operating costs to fluoridate community water supplies. Please note that at the present time, it is not feasible to develop a schedule for completing these goals since there is no identified funding for fluoridation of community water supplies from the federal government or private foundations.